



# Department of Justice

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UNITED STATES ATTORNEY RICHARD S. HARTUNIAN ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP  
PROJECT INITIATIVE IN THE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY

***Coalition of federal, state, and local legal and law enforcement agencies to lead 5<sup>th</sup> grade class  
discussions about the justice system, positive decision-making and  
becoming productive citizens***

[ALBANY, NEW YORK]— United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian, Mayor Gerald D. Jennings, City School District of Albany Superintendent Raymond Coluciello, Ed.D., and Albany Police Chief Steven Krokoff announce a new school initiative, the LEADership Project (Legal Education and Decision Making), which will provide all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in the City School District of Albany with lessons about making good decisions, the effects of bad choices, and finding the path to rewarding career opportunities.

A coalition of over 50 volunteers from 19 agencies and groups will work with teachers and students from every 5<sup>th</sup> grade class in the City School District of Albany by participating in four class sessions throughout the school year. The volunteers are members of the following agencies: United States Attorney's Office; Office of the Federal Public Defender; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Drug Enforcement Administration; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; U.S. Department of Homeland Security Investigations; U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Air Marshal Service; U.S. Marshal's Service; U. S. Probation; U.S. Secret Service; New York State Police; New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services; New York State Division of Parole; Albany County District Attorney's Office; Albany Police Department; Albany County Sheriff's Department; Albany Corporation Counsel; Albany County Family Court; and members of the Albany area defense bar.

The class lessons will focus on making good decisions, the effects of bad choices, finding the right way, and achieving the good life by pursuing positive career goals. Volunteers will lead discussions on these topics and use role playing techniques to engage the students and illustrate these concepts.

U.S. Attorney Hartunian thanked the broad coalition of federal, state, and local agencies and individuals for their enthusiastic embrace of this far reaching initiative. Hartunian noted that, "We in law enforcement recognize that aggressive enforcement actions directed at gangsters and violent criminals are only part of the solution to the problems plaguing the residents of Albany and other cities within the Northern District of New York. Equally important is our effort to reach out to our community leaders and schools to send the message that we will work with you to encourage our young people to make good decisions and lead productive lives."

"We are grateful to U.S. Attorney Richard Hartunian for initiating this exceptional partnership to benefit our students and families," Dr. Colucciello said. "When we work together there is so much that we can achieve for our young people and our community. The LEADership Project is another outstanding example of this. I know it will help our fifth-grade students learn skills that will help them at this important time in their lives."

Mayor Jennings stated, "It is paramount that we provide young people with the direction to make right choices and go on to lead productive lives. Providing them with the tools to do that can be done effectively through educational programs like The LEADership Project. This is an important collaborative initiative that hopefully will provide students the ability to make the choice to stay out of gangs and away from violent crime. I would like to commend everyone who has played a role in getting this program off the ground."

Chief Krokoff said, "Aggressive law enforcement only plays one part of the solution in attacking the problem of gangs and violent crime in the City of Albany and the Capital Region. Educating our youth on how to make good decisions and what impact bad decisions can have on them and the community is a vital part in deterring young people away from gangs and crime. We all must work collectively to provide positive alternatives to crime for our young people. Starting in school is the first step to giving them the direction to make the right choices."

Further inquiries can be directed to United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian, Albany, New York at (518) 431-0247.